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BOOK REVIEWS

THE ENGLISH CATHOLIC REVIVAL IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY. PAUL THUREAU-DANGIN. 2 vols. Simpkin, Marshall, & Co. London. 31s. 6d.

M. Thureau-Dangin is a distinguished Academician, whose *Histoire de la Monarchie de Juillet* ranks as a classic. In the present work, published in France in 1899, he enters upon new ground. A liberal Catholic in the pre-Modernist sense of the word, he represents the best traditions of French Catholicism; traditions which, because they express the mind and conscience of the nation, will survive both Pius X and M. Combes. It is natural that he should look with interest at the Oxford Movement and its various offshoots; it is also natural that he should see them a little out of proportion and attribute to them a greater significance than they really possess. For the same reason that Catholicism is, and will long remain, a power in French life, it is not, and will not become, a power in English life; because it is not Catholicism but Protestantism which expresses the religious genius of Englishmen. Faulty, however, as M. Thureau-Dangin's perspective is, he has given us a very readable book, the result of wide and careful reading, in which much information not easily accessible to the general reader will be found. Those who demur to the dictum of James I, that one side of the question is enough for an honest man, may be referred to Archbishop Whately's *Cautions for the Times*; to Dean Stanley's *Life of Dr. Arnold*; to Miss Petre's memorable *Autobiography and Life of George Tyrrell*; perhaps, *invito auctore*, to Mr. W. Ward's excellent and very candid *Life of Cardinal Newman*; and to Mr. McCabe's *Decay of the Church of Rome*. The subject falls into three divisions: (1) The Oxford Movement; (2) the Converts to Rome; (3) Later Anglo-Catholicism; and the comment may follow the same lines.

Whatever else the Oxford Movement had or had not, it emphatically had charm. It fell like a breath of romance upon an unromantic age, and a sure instinct drew the romantic to it; nor, if the romance of our own time is larger, should the day of small things be despised. Nor was the *vates sacer* wanting; in Newman it pos-

sessed a great man of letters, a born artist, a consummate advocate, and, if not a leader, certainly an inspirer and mover of men. It had also the power of personal piety; there was a more profound conviction of sin, a more "fearful looking for judgment," a livelier sense of the presence of God than are common today. Yet taken as a whole, the modern conscience is better informed and more right-minded. Fear was the dominant note of Tractarian religion, both in those who went to Rome and in those who remained. This led to a false moral standard. Either, as with Pascal, human nature as such was sin; or, as with the casuists, the conception of right and wrong became external. Those who scrupled at the curtailing of an office or the breaking of a fast would fall below the standards of men of the world in courtesy and consideration for others, in temper, in truthfulness, and honor. These they regarded as "natural" virtues. The result was a certain formalism; the impression left was one of regular observance rather than of spirituality or real goodness of heart. While the outlook over life was individualistic, poverty and sickness were the occasions for the practice of almsgiving, not evil social conditions which could and should be overcome. No social reformer—Manning's noble passion for reform came to him with the disillusionment of old age—was drawn to the Oxford Movement; nor, with few if any exceptions, did it attract those whom the older Evangelicals would have described as "converted" men. The Tractarians were devout; they were in trouble, often in lifelong trouble, about their souls. But the final experience—"joy and peace in believing"—lay beyond them; they were seekers, but they had not found.

The Movement bulks so large in controversy that we are apt to forget on how restricted a scale it acted. The rank and file of the nation were untouched by it; the leaders of English thought—the great Victorian poets, thinkers, historians, scientists—passed it by. It came into contact with a section only even of the religious world. To the English Nonconformist, the Scotch Presbyterian, the Irish Catholic, it was a mere name. The Evangelicals were hostile, non-party Churchmen suspicious; Cambridge, the University of common-sense, was indifferent. It was from Oxford, the University of ideas, that it issued—name and thing. An Oxford man may be forgiven a certain prejudice in favor of ideas. But the more importance we attach to ideas, the more important it becomes that our ideas shall be reasonable; and the ideas that underlay the Oxford Movement were unreasonable and without foundation in fact. Of Newman, Goldwin Smith notices that "he

was always in quest not of the truth, but of the best system"; of W. G. Ward, M. Thureau-Dangin tells us that "above all else a formidable dialectician, he professed to ignore history and to despise facts."¹

Ignorance, indeed, was the Achilles' heel of the Movement. The Oxford of the time was provincial; and, great in many ways as Newman was, his learning was moderate, even for his time.

"The force of his dialectic and the beauty of his rhetorical exposition were such that one's eye and ear were charmed, and one never thought of enquiring on how narrow a basis of philosophical culture his great gifts were expended. A. P. Stanley once said to me, 'How different the fortunes of the Church of England might have been, if Newman had been able to read German!' That puts the matter in a nutshell. Newman assumed and adorned the narrow basis on which Laud had stood two hundred years before. All the grand development of human reason from Aristotle down to Hegel was a sealed book to him."²

The common-sense argument against the Catholic position is strong, but it lends itself to one-sided treatment. The Tractarians knew too much to take the No-Popery polemic of their time at its own valuation; they did not know enough to see that, in spite of its faults of taste and temper, its substance was reasonable and its instinct sound. The growth of critical and historical science during the last half-century has transformed the situation. The Tractarian of the Movement did not know and did not want to know. The Tractarian of today goes farther; he wants not to know.

The more consistent Tractarians felt themselves less and less at ease in Anglicanism; logically and temperamentally Rome was their goal. The same reasoning which demonstrated the Divine Right of Bishops demonstrated also the Divine Right of the Papacy; nor could the temper which welcomed sacerdotalism find its formal completion in Papalism displeasing. On the other hand, the very virtues which dispose a man to Catholicism indispose him to independent action in religion; the quality in Pusey which M. Thureau-Dangin describes as "quiet obstinacy"³ appears to his biographer "sublime faith." The most distinguished of the converts were Newman and Manning. Each was a notable personality, a figure with which no Protestant ecclesiastic of the time could compare. They came to the English Catholic body at the psychological moment when, owing to the Irish immigration after the famine of 1847, it was driven to enlarge its borders. This material increase was

¹ I, 144.

² Mark Pattison, *Memoirs*, p. 210.

³ I, 386.

accompanied and enhanced by the prestige of the convert movement; the union of the two transformed what had been a scattered and obscure community into a Church which has become a power, if not in our intellectual, certainly in our political and social life. Never were two men more different.

"The one, a subtle and profound thinker, disdainful of outward action, more preoccupied with the realities of the invisible than of the visible world, used to study thought in all its phases, with an aptitude for understanding natures the most unlike his own, keenly appreciative of the perplexities of the human mind; the other a man of action and of government, little curious as to mere ideas, seeing only the basis of operation, a mind powerful, courageous, elevated, but absolute, easily imperious, seeking only what he believed the true and the good, and making straight for it, decided in treating as hostile whoever followed a different direction, incapable of entering into thoughts other than his own, or of sympathising with the intellectual difficulties of his opponents."¹

The English Church has been reproached with not having known how to use Newman. His type was perhaps too individual for a community to use easily. And certainly the Church of his adoption did not use him; from the first he was an embarrassment in England and a suspect at Rome. He liberalized, as good men do, with years and experience; in the sagacious and moderate Newman of 1870 it is difficult to recognize the fierce obscurantist of 1845. The former is the Newman whom we know. And if more than any one other man he made the legend of Catholicism—for he was a great magician, and, like the pious sons of Noah, he went backward and threw a veil over its shame—more than any one other man he opened to men irrespective of sect the ideal vistas of religion, seeing and enabling others to see the ladder of Bethel, which, though clouds and darkness which we may not pierce lie between them, unites heaven and earth.

Manning's best years were spent in the pursuit of the chimera of Infallibility. A reasoner as abstract as, though less acute than, Ward, he had Ward's contempt for history, the appeal to which he denounced as treason. At the Vatican Council his unscrupulous lobbying displeased the Cardinals even of his own faction—*Non ita sunt tractandae res Ecclesiae* was the reproach addressed to him. The definition for which he fought was imposed upon the Council, but with it leanness entered into his soul. The proof of the greatness of the man is that he learned his lesson; he "put away childish things." His last years were devoted to social service, in which he

¹ II, 87.

ranks with General Booth and Lord Shaftesbury. No man of his generation did more to restore the credit of religion with the masses than he. On this side he left a very noble record; and it is one of the paradoxes of human affairs that the best and most lasting work of each of the two great English cardinals was done outside the limits of the Church of which he was a prince, and has left its mark rather on those without than within the fold.

With their death "the heroic age"¹ of the Revival closed. The Roman Catholic body continues to attract wavering Anglicans, and does good work among the Irish poor in the great towns. But the converts have fallen off both in number and in distinction; while, among those in particular—and they are the great majority of the Catholic community—who stand on the margin of civilization, there is a great and increasing "leakage." The weakening of institutional and dogmatic religion, noticeable in all the Churches, is a particularly disintegrating symptom where the emphasis falls so markedly on institutions and dogma as is the case in Catholicism; the thing itself is there.

In the National Church the Movement has brought about a notable increase of ecclesiasticism—in ceremonial, in teaching, and generally in atmosphere. Part of this development is æsthetic—the old services were frankly wearisome; part historic—the Protestant tradition, as it stood, was untenable; part religious—pre-Tractarian Anglicanism was hard, cold, and dry. The ill-judged ritual prosecutions, encouraged by the Victorian bishops, defeated their own purpose. Deprivation might have met the case; but the imprisonment of good, if wrong-headed, men for the violation of a rubric was felt to be intolerable; the penalty was out of proportion to the offence. This sense of injustice, combined with clerical *esprit de corps*, did much to unite the Ritualists with the traditional High Churchmen into the "Church Party"—a party now dominant in and aiming at the exclusive exploitation of the Church. Its notes are insistence on Episcopacy, the accentuation of mediæval dogma and ritual, belief in the magical powers of the priesthood, and impatience of State control. These notes vary in intensity; the torrid climate of the *Church Times* differs from the temperate zone of the *Guardian*. But the moderate section follows the lead of the militant, and the party acts as a whole. Its organization has enabled it to impose itself on the bishops, whose first thought is to keep the Church together; and through them on the Government and on public opinion. The tendency among politicians is to regard the Church as a backwater, and to leave it to manage its own

¹ II, 425.

business in its own way. *Hoc Ithacus velit.* But the feeling is that Disestablishment, though not imminent, is inevitable; that in religious affairs it is safer for a Ministry to take the line of least resistance; and perhaps that there is a certain incongruity in the intervention of indifferent or sceptical statesmen in Church affairs. Those who stand outside the compromises imposed by party politics see the matter in another light. The supremacy of the Crown effectively exercised through its responsible ministers, through Parliament, and through the Courts of Law, represents better than either a synod mixed or clerical, or, under our circumstances, than a direct popular vote, that *consensus populi* which was from the first held essential to any corporate action of the Church.¹ For it is the genuine popular voice that is needed, not that of the clerically-minded layman, who is less a layman than a clergyman in lay dress. Religion is too important a part of civilization to be left to develop one-sidedly; the interests of a national Church are those of the nation, which cannot safely suffer it to fall into the hands of a faction. For while the majority of the clergy and an appreciable and energetic minority of the laity act with the Church Party, the nation and the great mass even of Churchmen is on the other side. Were the question one of toleration, the solution would be easy. The Church is comprehensive and knowledge grows. But it is one of incompatible principles. The freedom of the Church, as the Zanzibar school understands it, is freedom to exclude opponents. There can be no terms between truth and error. While one Protestant remains in the Anglican communion the end of the Catholic revival is unattained.² The recent Kikuyu controversy and the anti-Modernist campaign, which smoulder in the clerical press and which a spark might fan to flame, make the radical divergence of standpoint unmistakable; and were the English mind logical, which it fortunately is not, it is difficult to see how the Tudor settlement of religion, to which the country owes so much, could remain in its existing form. *Spero fore* is M. Thureau-Dangin's answer to the question, Will the Catholic Revival end in Roman Catholicism?³ He will perhaps be found to have underrated the English genius for compromise, the reason latent in unreason, and the atmosphere created, even for those who live outside them, by ideas.

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¹ Acts 15²².

² II, 600.

³ II, 603.